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cwutch

AT HOME IN CARDIFF

Official publication of



FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD!

From street feasts to Michelin promises, our who's who of Cardiff's changing food scene
PAGES 3, 4 & 5

ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROATH

Back on buyers' 'most wanted' lists, this bustling suburb has returned to the spotlight
PAGES 8 & 9

INSUFFICIENTLY WELSH

Griff Rhys Jones tells us of his love for our city
PAGES 6 & 7



Editor's letter

Now the sun has finally reaching our small island, it's brought with it an appreciation of what our city has to offer. After all, eating alfresco is one treat mostly reserved for the summer months – at least for us Cardiffians. And so on page 3 we offer up the latest from the capital's vibrant food scene. From street feasts to Michelin promises, it's all on our doorstep, but did you know it?!

Speaking of what's on the menu, Griff Rhys Jones stopped by to chat to us about his latest book, which is all about the perils of 'not being Welsh enough'. Griff's latest brainwave is to have us all speaking Welsh through the introduction of Cymraeg-only restaurant menus. That'll ensure we all know our 'bara brith' from our 'tatws popty' (that's oven baked potatoes, by the way).

Are you making the big move from renting to buying this year? If so, we'd love to hear about your experience. With the Cardiff sales market picking up and interest rates remaining low, we asked four young professionals what their property aspirations were and found out which side of the fence they'll be settling on this year.

Back at the top of many a young professional's location list – and also back as a family favourite – Roath is once again having its day. The area seemed to hit a peak in terms of its popularity with students in the early 2000s, but it's since returned to its roots as students increasingly opt to live in Cathays. Read more about the richly diverse and historically fascinating Roath on page 8.

I hope you enjoy our magazine, and wish you drizzle-free barbeques this summer,

Emma



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As a local company born and bred in Cardiff, we like to think we know our city and its people pretty well. And having been doing business for over a decade, we're confident we know its property market like the backs of our hands too.

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yummy!

What's cooking, Cardiff?

Cardiff's food and restaurant scene is more vibrant and exciting than ever before – with more choice across an ever-widening spectrum of formats and flavours. Chris Amodeo went in search the latest trends.

Eating out in Cardiff is a happier, more exciting experience these days. The food landscape is changing, and a vibrant grassroots scene comprising festivals and markets, pop-up restaurants and a desire for locally sourced, quality produce is revitalising the city's food scene.

"I've lived in Cardiff for almost ten years and in that time the restaurant scene has changed beyond all recognition," agrees Nicki Tudor, of food blog Cardiff Bites. "We've gone from a city that had a smattering of half-decent eateries to a much more vibrant and energetic scene."

Surviving the chain gang

That being said, the economic downturn meant hard times for some independent restaurants, exacerbated by the arrival of even more, seemingly recession-proof chain restaurants following the completion of St David's 2 and the Hayes redevelopment.

More recently, mini chain Pieminister from Bristol has opened on St Mary Street (I'm not much of a pie fan, but I enjoyed), and Mexican newbie Wahaca, led by Thomasina Miers and Mark Selby, has chosen Cardiff to open its first non-London branch, due to open in the autumn.

While Wahaca chose Cardiff "because it seemed to be a model fit", as marketing manager Oli Ingham

told WalesOnline, it's still good news, and not only for lovers of Wahaca's modern take on Mexican. Possibly for the very first time, Cardiff has been chosen over any other UK city as a London-based company's non-capital branch. Where once Cardiff may have waited five years to get something available in English regional cities, now we're even jumping the queue.

More importantly, despite the fierce competition among the chains, there remains room for independents to flourish. "Although we are saturated with the ubiquitous chains, you don't have to look far to see genuine innovators and dedicated independents ploughing their furrow," says local food blogger Jonathan Swain (platelickedclean.blogspot.com).

"Even the town centre, so often a jigsaw of predictable brands, has a few independent gems such as The Potted Pig and Café Città. I'm seeing more and more interest in these, and an increased willingness by people to seek out things that little bit different."

Perhaps a restaurant's ability to be different and its willingness to adapt are also important. An example of just such a successful independent restaurant is Stefano's on Romilly Crescent. Stefano Caramella and his team offer an elevated dining experience compared to

a typical Italian trattoria, as well as hosting themed nights devoted to wine tasting or opera.

"Although we are traditional in many ways, it's the family feel, relaxed atmosphere and attention to detail that makes us so special," says Stefano. "We also keep our prices reasonable considering the extremely high quality of our ingredients. Over more than 12 years we have established a very loyal customer base. We try to change with the times and keep looking for new ideas and ways to improve – keeping up with current trends."

Popping up on the street

"You can see from a consumer point of view that there is a definite backlash against the bigger chains, which in turn opens the door for smaller, independent places, with high quality, locally sourced food," says Rhys Canning, co-owner of Got Beef Bar and Kitchen, purveyors of trendy gourmet burgers since 2012.

"Cardiff has always had the reputation that it is 'catching up' with other cities in terms of food trends, but we are starting to see new concepts and ideas heading here much faster now."

The restaurants we choose to eat at, and new ones, are increasingly influenced by street food, which itself is a growing market. According

to a May food industry survey, 47 per cent of consumers in the UK are planning to eat more street food in the next year.

Got Beef's founder, Cai Pritchard, who had worked for many years as a chef in various restaurants

“It would be great to see more of a regular street food or food truck scene in Wales. It feels like we’re years behind the fast casual food revolution that’s revitalised many a city all over the world.”

across the city, was inspired by the popularity of street food that had slowly been making its way over to London from the States. “I scoured the internet and came across a converted bus from which to sell burgers,” he says. “We attended various events across the country and held some pop-up restaurants, which was a great way to test our product and gave me the confidence to take the plunge with a permanent place.”

Got Beef Bar and Kitchen, which opened on Whitchurch Road in April, offers fantastic-tasting burgers made with award-winning Welsh black beef, as well as ‘dirty fries’ that’ll have you texting friends in excitement. “The Grazing Shed and more recently Got Beef have provided a real solution to that old question, ‘Where do I get a really good burger in Cardiff?’” says Jonathan Swain.

Without their ‘trial runs’ in a street food van and pop-up, Got Beef would not have evolved into the fully-fledged permanent business it has become. “The scene can be a great way of independent businesses making a name for themselves. Sadly, we had many issues with Cardiff Council, which, unlike other cities (such as Bristol), seemed dead set against the street food scene emerging in Cardiff,” says Rhys. “Hopefully in years to come, the way of thinking will start to change.”

Sam Evans, co-founder of the Hang Fire Smokehouse, also feels Cardiff lags behind. “It would be great to see more of a regular street food or food truck scene in Wales. It feels like we’re years behind the fast casual food revolution that’s revitalised many a city all over the world,” she says.

“That doesn’t mean dodgy burgers and hot dogs from a dilapidated old van; the food truck revolution should be about an elevated food offering served from the convenience of a food truck. In America, coast-to-coast, exciting and innovative food trucks are part and parcel of the urban landscape.”

Smoke signals of change

Sam and Shauna Guinn’s six-month American adventure inspired them to establish Hang Fire Smokehouse, a regular BBQ pop-up first at Splott’s Canadian pub, then Porter’s bar, and now the Lansdowne in Canton.

“The biggest story in Cardiff this last year has undoubtedly been the smoky wondrousness of

Hang Fire Smokehouse,” enthuses Jonathan Swain. “They show genuine dedication, genuine skill, genuine vision. I recently spent some time in their workshop and could not fail to be impressed at good old-fashioned attention to detail.”

Hangfire discovered their love for barbecue in the Deep South. “Sam had a passion for American BBQ before we went, so that was always on the back burner as an idea, but it wasn’t until we hit Texas, Georgia,

Tennessee and the Carolinas that the back yard BBQ idea really started to become a possibility. We ate, slept and breathed BBQ for five solid months, and we ordered our smoker from Texas.”

While a pop-up restaurant may seem like a low risk enterprise, a huge amount of work goes into Hang Fire Smokehouse’s regular gig. “A lot rides on us putting in the hours to make the best BBQ we can,” says Sam.

“We work seven days a week to feed the fine folks that show up to the Lansdowne every week. Reputation is everything on the food scene, and as soon as you set standards, you have to keep them up. We’re really proud of what we do and we care about each and every plate of food that goes out.”

Gastronomic public houses

Another change to have occurred is with dining in pubs. “The really big thing over the last three to four years has been the development of the gastro-pub,” says Nicki Tudor. “They’ve gone from being a bit pretentious to serving quality grub and a proper pint of real ale. Urban Tap House, Hang Fire Smokehouse and the Knife & Fork Food chain are great examples.”

Knife & Fork Food opened The Conway in Pontcanna in 2008. Its continued success as a local pub paved the way for overhaul of The Pilot in Penarth in 2012 and The Discovery in Cyncoed in March 2014.

“In recent years people have been turning away from more formal ways of dining towards a more casual experience, that offers comfort and familiarity and yet does not compromise on quality,” says Sharon Noakes, a director at Knife & Fork Food.

“We don’t consider our pubs to be gastro-pubs. Our pubs are great pubs that happen to serve fantastic food.”

Semantics aside, this gastro-pub model may deliver many a failing traditional boozer from the brink of closure, as well as bringing quality, casual dining to suburbs so far bereft of such offerings on their doorstep.

As an aside, earlier this year Knife & Fork Food sadly closed Wood Brasserie in Cardiff Bay,



Slurp!

Pop-ty Experience

James Sommerin Restaurant Images by Huw Jones
www.hjphoto.co.uk



Hang Fire Smokehouse



Hang Fire Smokehouse



Got Beef Bar & Kitchen

Know your onions!

Lansdowne: new Chef Gavin Owen - started his training at Nant Ddu Lodge and then at one of Cardiff’s finest restaurants, Le Gallois, and latterly at the Hardwick, Abergavenny.

Masterchef: Larkin Cen is launching Hokkei in Cardiff with other Cardiff finalist Dale Williams.



Pop-ty Experience



Pop-ty Experience



Got Beef Bar & Kitchen



a decision based principally upon the Bay’s “changing demographics in the last 15 years”,

“Food is something that brings us together. People strike up new friendships on the nights, and it’s a pleasure to see this happen.”

says Sharon. “After much discussion it was ultimately decided that the more casual, chain-centric character of the Cardiff Bay dining scene no longer suited the Woods brand.” Suffice to say, Cardiff’s grassroots food revolution probably won’t take place in the Bay.

Church hall dining

Another form of ‘guerilla dining’ is offered by Llanishen High School teacher Angharad Elias, whose Y Pop-ty began just before Christmas when she cooked for a bunch of friends in a local Scouts hall.

“People understand food a lot better nowadays and want something authentic.”

Since then it’s been a “a very fast rollercoaster ride” for Angharad, as word quickly spread of her regular pop-up, offering just 20 lucky people a three-course, set-menu meal for £30 in St Catherine’s Church Hall in Pontcanna.

“The idea of it being pop-up and occasional initially started due to the sheer fear of the financial commitment of getting my own place. But as time goes on, I realise that it’s the exclusivity and uniqueness that makes it special and attractive to my audience,” says Angharad.

“Food is something that brings us together. People strike up new friendships on the nights, and it’s a pleasure to see this happen. I like to think the Pop-ty experience – and it is an experience, not just a meal – is personal and tailored especially for the audience of that night.”

Stars and stripes

Even Michelin star chefs aren’t above doing the odd pop-up. “The foodie landscape in Cardiff is on the up definitely,” says James Sommerin. “I myself have done a few really successful pop-ups recently.”

May saw the long-awaited opening of James’s brand new, eponymously named restaurant on The Esplanade, Penarth. “We’ve designed everything about the restaurant ourselves,” he told Cwtch. “There are large windows right the way around the restaurant to make the most of the sea view and the decor is light and airy. It has been designed with a relaxed atmosphere in mind. I want to give the diners the best experience possible, and that doesn’t just come from food; I want our service to exceed everybody’s expectations.”

The James Sommerin restaurant is of course a welcome addition to Penarth’s array of quality eateries. As Cardiff is the only European capital without a Michelin star, we hope that James Sommerin’s new restaurant gains the same recognition as his previous restaurant, the Crown at Whitebrook, and raises the standard on this side of the Ely River too.

Eastern promise

Another packed and exciting area of Cardiff’s restaurant scene is in Indian cuisine. We love a good curry, us Welsh, and Cardiff offers the very best in quality and originality. Mint and Mustard is Cardiff’s most highly awarded of

any restaurant, while the multi-award-winning Moksh in Cardiff Bay seems to snap at its heels.

“Where I think Cardiff does well is in Indian food, with Anand George at Purple Poppadom blazing a trail for regional – specifically Kerala – cooking, and with his influence being felt across the city as previous students take over their own kitchens,” says Jonathan Swain.

Here too change is afoot. The newly opened Bombay Café in the old Bute Dock Hotel and Dabbawalla, previously Haveli, on City Road offer a more traditional or vintage experience. “People understand food a lot better nowadays and want something more authentic,” says Shaz Haris, owner of Dabbawalla. “In Cardiff, we’ve seen the number of places serving street snacks, chai, lassi and thalis grow in the last year. Things that

people eat or drink everyday in India and has more of a traditional, homemade feel to it.”

People want an experience now when they go out to eat, says Shaz. “At Dabbawalla, we aim to take our customers on a cultural journey of India, from the menu, the vintage décor to the tiffin box takeaway club that pays homage to the dabbawalla food delivery system that has been in existence in Mumbai for over a century.”

Across the Welsh capital, there are exciting things coming to the boil. “Cardiff’s food scene is expanding,” confirms Cai Pritchard. “We now have some great little restaurants serving good quality local food, which is helping to put Cardiff on the foodie map.” Food lovers of Cardiff, you’re in for a treat.

A few Cardiff food gems

“It’s the less formal, street-food options which often prove the most diverting,” says Jonathan Swain from Cardiff food blog theplatelickedclean.blogspot.co.uk. “Whether it’s Katiwok’s kati rolls, or baguettes and bagels from Fresh or New York Deli, an Animal Style burger at Got Beef, a mutton thali at The Bombay Café, the tenderest chicken shish kebab for miles at Mowlana, or the beef short ribs at Hang Fire Smokehouse.”

“We’re huge fans of the Cocorico Patisserie,” says Rhys from Got Beef. “It’s great to see everything handmade on-site to such an incredibly high standard. It was helpful in our decision to open on Whitchurch Road too.”

“Our favourite snack lunch spot in the Bay is The Deck – delicious baguettes using great ingredients, made with genuine care, plus great service and good for afternoon tea. No wonder they’re third best place to eat in Cardiff on Tripadvisor.”

Cardiff Over Coffee

We caught up with Griff Rhys Jones in a Roath coffee shop to discuss Cardiff, the mistakes of town planners, and not being a proper Welshman.

Words by: Christian Amodio

WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY LIKE FOR YOU?

There's no such thing as an average day, really, but I do spend too much time answering emails. It distresses me that before the web, we were in an illiterate age – you never wrote anything down; we all just spoke on the phone. And now we all spend our time writing to one another. It's good – it's actually an improvement in some ways, but I spend so much time writing emails.

DO YOU PREFER WRITING FOR SCREEN, WRITING BOOKS, PRESENTING, OR ACTING?

I love writing for a book. I like the way a book is created. An author I was recently speaking to likened it to building a wall; if you have the time to sit down everyday and write 1,000 words, you'll have your book. *Insufficiently Welsh*, my fifth book, is an account of a journey around Wales, so it was a bit like writing a retrospective diary.

DO OTHER PEOPLE CONSIDER YOU TO BE 'INSUFFICIENTLY WELSH', DO YOU THINK?

Well, a little while ago I was nominated for a Welsh BAFTA. Outside the Millennium Centre there were media people. Eventually S4C decided they wanted a word, and I was asked, 'How do you feel to be up against a Welsh presenter?' I said the clue to my nationality was in my name. So the interviewer started the interview over again: 'Er, Griff, can you tell me how it feels to be up against a proper Welsh presenter?'

OUCH. HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW CARDIFF?

Well, my father was from Llanishen. I made a programme about him and so went to his old home for the first time last year. As a child I used to go to Penylan because that's where his mother moved when my grandfather died.

PENYLAN IS UP THE HILL FROM WHERE WE'RE SAT, YOU KNOW?

Is it? I don't know. The last time I was really



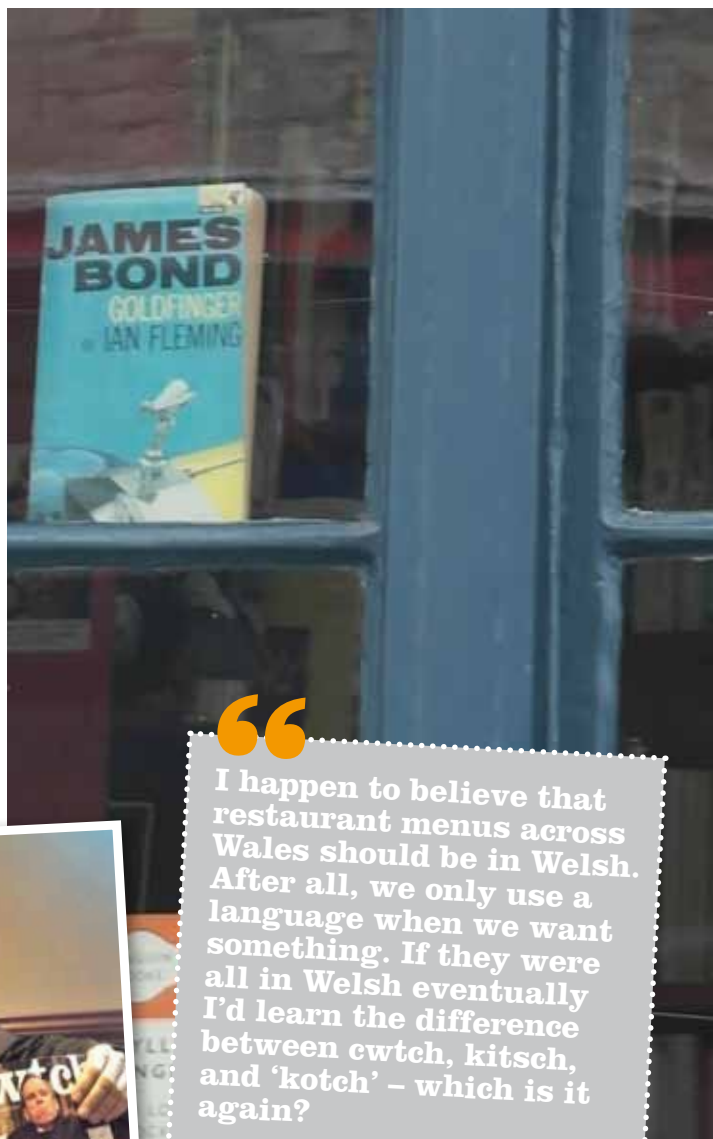
knocking about here was when I about six. I'm now 60, so I'm afraid none of it comes back. My memory isn't very good – I live in the eternal present.

WHY DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE SUCH A STRONG AFFILIATION TO BUILDINGS?

I don't know why that is. I'm still knocked sideways by beautiful buildings. I'm a romantic by nature, a fantasist if you like. For my book *Semi-Detached*, the only way to piece together my past was by revisiting the places I'd been when I was a kid. I went to where my grandparents lived in Weston-super-Mare, but my mother gave me the wrong address. I didn't realise: all the memories still came flooding back! So I have to treat with a pinch of salt some of my waves of nostalgia.

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF CARDIFF'S ARCHITECTURE?

One of the things I've enjoyed about driving around Cardiff and Newport, where I visited Tredegar House, is as you come into both places you come through these buffered suburbs; places which have a sort of settled-in look to them, there's a streak of individualism in the way each house



“ I happen to believe that restaurant menus across Wales should be in Welsh. After all, we only use a language when we want something. If they were all in Welsh eventually I'd learn the difference between *cwtch*, *kitsch*, and *'kotch* – which is it again? ”

and garden is kept, and I think these are extraordinary. There's a quiet life to them.

YOU LEANT YOUR WEIGHT TO A CAMPAIGN TO STOP COUNCIL ENCROACHMENT OF CARDIFF'S BUTE PARK, DIDN'T YOU?

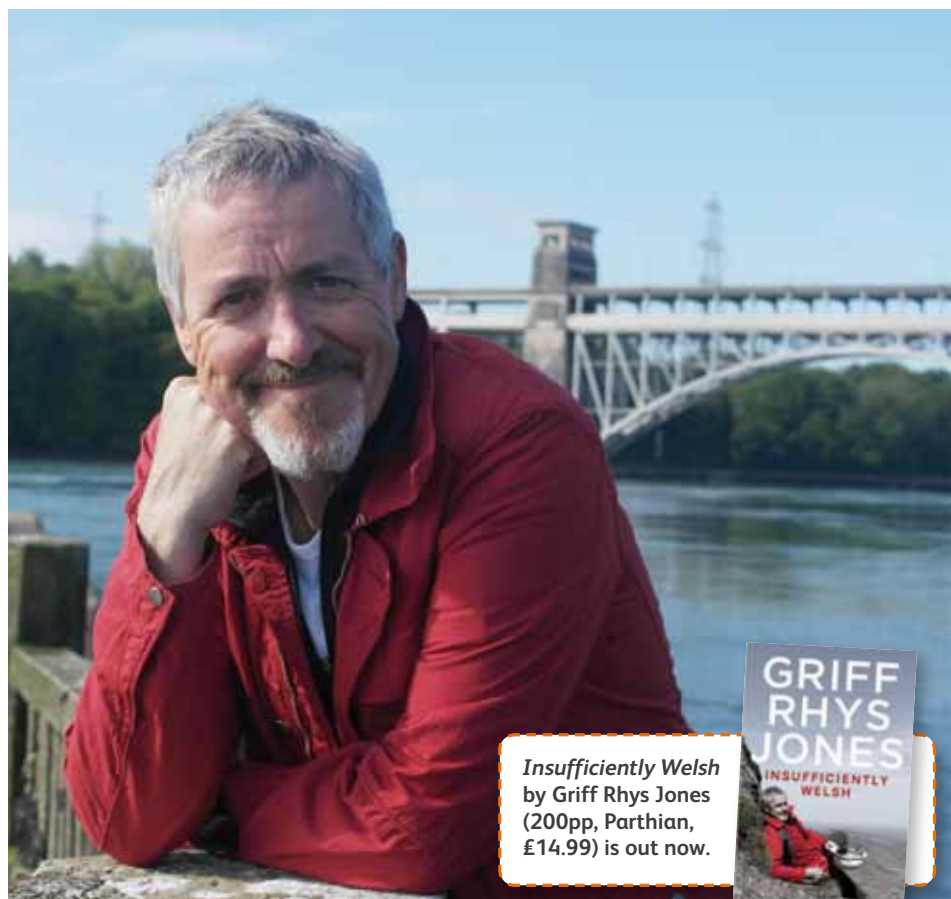
Yes. Whenever I'm here I stay in Cathedral Road and I run through the park everyday along the Taff. It's a magnificent and rather wonderful thing, that park.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE TOWNS DEVELOP?

The government still says we should encourage more commerce in the middle of towns – that's such an old fashioned, 1970s view. I think we need to encourage village communities within towns, such as Roath, Llandaff or Pontcanna, as this seems to be the future of all cities. But councils have a desire to commercialise the centres for the purposes of rates, to push them up.

IN INSUFFICIENTLY WELSH YOU SAY, "CARDIFF MEANT THE ARCADES", BECAUSE YOU WERE DRAGGED AROUND THEM AS A BORED CHILD. WHEN DID YOU LAST VISIT THEM?

We used to have a little office in Castle Arcade so I know that one very well. Independent businesses are always under pressure from bigger businesses, but the



Insufficiently Welsh by Griff Rhys Jones (200pp, Parthian, £14.99) is out now.

arcades suit small independents. Arcades are the future.

YOU TRAVEL ALL AROUND WALES IN YOUR BOOK. WHERE HAD YOU NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN AND WHAT MADE A LASTING IMPRESSION?

The Beacons was just about the only area I'd not been to before. They put me in a glider for the programme I was making and I flew up over them. My pilot, Bo Nilsson, is a Swedish gliding instructor who returns every year to South Wales because there's nowhere else in the world like the Beacons for gliding.

YOU SAY THAT WALES IS THE 'LAND OF MY AUNTIES' AND CALL YOURSELF EPPING WELSH. DID MEETING SO MANY DIFFERENT VARIETIES OF WELSH NOT MAKE YOU FEEL LESS OF AN OUTSIDER?

No. I don't think I am as Welsh as they are – if you're not brought up in the culture, all sorts of things trip you up all the time. The language is the main one. I know more Italian due to eating in far too many Italian restaurants than I do Welsh. Therefore, I happen to believe that restaurant menus across Wales should be in Welsh. After all, we only use a language when we want something. If they were all in Welsh eventually I'd learn the difference between cwtch, kitsch, and 'kotch' – which is it again?

Did you know?

Roath once had a power station on Newport Road. It began supplying electricity in 1902 and was finally demolished in 1972.

Photograph: Jon Candy, 'Outlet from the lake' Flickr.com



Photograph: Jon Candy, 'An afternoon in the parks, Cardiff, Wales, UK' Flickr.com

Anything can happen

Multi-cultural and bustling, sometimes shabby but always exciting, you have to love Roath. And fair play, plenty of us do.

Words by: I Loves The 'Diff

Convenient for so much of what Cardiff has to offer, and a vibrant, commercial hub and residential district all of its own, Cardiff without Roath is barely worth contemplating. "There's a theory, which I like enormously, that the city should never have been called Cardiff in the first place," writes Peter Finch, life-long Roath resident and Real Cardiff author. "Its original name was Roath."

It's perhaps ironic then that isn't even on the modern political map: wards of Penylan, Adamsdown and Plasnewydd deny Roath's claim to this swathe of northeast inner-city Cardiff, which was created as part of Cardiff's rapid, coal-powered expansion in the late 1800s and early in the 20th century. And on the ground these days, Roath's boundaries – with Cathays and Penylan to the west and north, and Adamsdown and Splott to the south and southwest – are blurred, like ink on a letter left out in the rain.

Despite this, Roath certainly has a sense of place – and excitement. "It's like a city within the city," says Matt Appleby, a director at Golley Slater and one of the creators of 'hyper local' blog, RoathCardiff.net. "I was finding Pontcanna a little dull, and Roath was the obvious answer. I love Roath's diversity – from grand, leafy park-side Victorian mansions to the more urban edge of City Road. It may be a cliché, but it really is the people that give Roath its edge, its sense of fun and the feeling that anything could happen."

All roads lead to Roath

It's not known for sure whether the name Roath (Y Rhath in Welsh) stems from the Irish word ráth, meaning 'fort', the Welsh word for gift (rhodd), or is derived from the ancient Roman settlement of Ratostabius. It was the latter to which Peter Finch was referring when he said Cardiff should be called Roath. Egyptian-Greek geographer Ptolemy, no less, placed the name here on a map in the second century.

Nearby Newport Road formed part of the Roman military route known as Via Julia Maritima. Along this ancient route one of Roath's oldest registered buildings existed – a 12th century chapel dedicated to St Margaret (demolished and rebuilt as the St Margaret's we know today, by the Third Marquis of Bute in 1868). Near to the chapel, Roath Dogfield (or Roath Manor), was built. It's now the Grade II listed funeral home.

At the other end of Albany Road from St Margaret's Church is a more grisly reminder of Roath's past. Contrary to popular belief, it's not because traffic can be particularly hazardous here that locals call this Death Junction. Cardiff's gibbet once stood in a plot known as the Cut Throats, where today City Road, Albany Road, Richmond Road, Crwys Road and Mackintosh Place converge.

A plaque on the wall of NatWest Bank is the only permanent reminder of these happenings. It recalls the execution of two innocent Catholic

priests, Phillip Evans and John Lloyds, on 22 July 1679, as do stained glass windows in nearby St Peter's church, the city's oldest surviving Catholic church. (Pope Paul IV declared Evans and Lloyds saints in 1970.)

Before the 1st Marquis of Bute acquired Roath in 1793, Roath was largely pastoral farmland and known as Roath-Keynsham, having belonged to Somerset's Keynsham Abbey since the Norman Conquest. A map of 1886 shows growth of terraced housing west of what is now City Road, but there is nothing of today's A-Z beyond Oakfield Street. Tracks that soon became Albany Road and Wellfield Road existed amid fields.

Fortunately, not all the green space became streets: Roath Park, which stretches from the Wild Gardens in Lakeside to Waterloo and Mill Gardens along the top of Roath, and is beloved of generations of Cardiffians, was opened in 1894, soon to be enveloped by suburbia.

Killings, kilts and kebabs

Anyone familiar with Roath and Cathays will have recognised a Scottish influence in the street names, especially around the Mackintosh Institute (locally known as The Mack), known for its bowling green and tennis courts.

Originally a grand house called Plasnewydd built by John Matthew Richards (1803-43), it passed to a relation whose daughter and heiress, Harriet Diana Arabella, married The Mackintosh of Mackintosh, Chief of Clan Chattan. Under the Mackintoshes, Plasnewydd had battlements added so it garnered the name Roath Castle (City Road was until 1905 called Castle Road).



Did you know?

Roath once had a railway station on the South Wales Main Line. It closed in 1917.

like g39, CardiffMADE and the Warehouse at Milgri all show contemporary work, and there's lots of non-gallery based stuff happening through us."

Held every October and now in its fifth year, Made in Roath has proven incredibly popular, hosting a mini street festival, creating street art, and organising an open house trail on which you can enter local artists' homes for a glimpse of their work (and a nose at their homes).

Creative types are found on Roath's street too, of course. Many a morning Boyd Clack can be seen enjoying a coffee on Wellfield Road. And the late Flying Picket singer and actor Brian Hibbard, a friend of Boyd's, was also one of Roath's more recognisable faces.

Where shopkeepers are friends

"I often think there are a lot more of us in Claude Road than there used to be," says Lionel Fanthorpe, who could well be in line for Roath's most interesting resident award (were it to exist). A TV and radio presenter, priest, media studies lecturer, author of some 250 books, former journalist, headteacher and weight training instructor (among many other things), Lionel is Roath's Renaissance man.

"When we moved into Roath, few of the big old houses had been converted into flats. The area certainly seems to have become more heavily populated and parking has become a problem," says the 79-year-old member of Mensa who has lived in Roath for more than 30 years.

According to Lionel, having good neighbours and its convenience for nearby shops is what makes Roath great. "We're like a friendly little enclave here. We really love it," he says.

When in 2008 Lionel was convalescing in hospital after heart surgery, the owner of the convenience store on Arran Street paid him a visit. "It really was an unexpected surprise," he says. "Where else but in Roath would that happen?" We're not sure, Lionel.

in Roath



The house and its estate were bestowed upon the local community in 1895. Along with the adjacent Gate Arts Centre, created from Plasnewydd Presbyterian Church at a cost of £2.8m and open since 2004, they are now valuable community resources.

For many, since the demise of City's Road's car showrooms in the 1970s and the Gaiety Cinema (opened in 1912 and a bingo hall from 1961 until closure in 1998), the street has become known mostly for Indian restaurants and fast food takeaways. However, as the popularity and excellent reviews of some of the street's newer Middle Eastern and Asian restaurants shows, the culinary scene is thriving, well supported by long-term residents and newcomers alike.

"When Roath is mentioned one thing that springs to mind is its diversity," says Luke Rice, who went to school in Roath and helps run a community sustainability programme called Cynefin. "It has such an interesting variety of people and cultures, all living side by side. It's great."

"After returning from stints living in Bristol and London, I knew Roath was the best area for me to live. There are so many different things going on in the area. It's fun and exciting. If Roath had a cinema I wouldn't need to leave." Sadly, long gone are the Gaiety and Albany Road's Globe.

Melting memories

These days, mention Albany Road and you think of charity shops. Roath has also seen a recent invasion of chain supermarkets, the most recent of which heralded the demolition of Meeks original shoe shop with its shrapnel scars from Second World War bombs.

"One of the things that gives the area its character is the ability for people to set up restaurants, shops, bars and galleries. It's increasingly difficult for them to find affordable premises to start up or grow in the area," says Matt Appleby, whose award-winning blog was established in what surely is one of the city's best pubs, The Albany.

Having opened in 1895, The Albany is possibly the third oldest surviving Roath pub, with the first being The George (1878) followed by and The Claude Hotel in 1890. Since then Roath has become well known for a vast and rich menu of pubs, cafes and restaurants, with seemingly every other property on Wellfield Road now food-related.

Russell Street-born and bred Vicky Pinnell is a switchboard operator with fond memories of growing up in Roath. "Wellfield Road seems to have always offered a slightly higher end type of retail and independent shops and cafes," she says. "Albany Road I think is more for your necessities, whereas Wellfield is more for life's luxuries, as it were."

And one of life's luxuries, then and now, is ice cream. "We used to love Thayers," recalls Vicky. "After visiting the Rec or Roath Park Lake, Thayer's was always number one pit stop on the way home (even in winter)." With the recent opening of Joe's Ice Cream in Wellfield Road, let's hope a revival of the popular local tradition is underway.

Made in Roath

Since the 1960s, Roath has had a vibrant poetry and literary scene – and these days the arts have caught up. "The art scene has definitely grown," says local artist Gail Howard, co-founder of Made in Roath, the annual Roath arts festival. "Galleries

Eat Roath

Frankies – 6 Mackintosh Place, Tel. 20 454 234. Great for takeaway pizza. Authentic, great-tasting, independent, Italian.

La Vita – 5 Wellfield Road, Tel. 20 480 161. Sicilian independent, great tasting food in a simple, relaxed atmosphere. Great for a date

Milgi – 213 City Rd, Tel. 20 473 150. Best for vegetarians (and cocktails)

Spice of Life – 1 Inverness Place, Tel. 20 487 146. Wholefood specialising in herbs, spices, pulses and grains. Great produce, lovely owners in business more than 30 years.

Allen's Bakery – An alleyway off Arran Place, Tel. 20 481 219. 'Roath's secret bakery' for more than 25 years.

Roath Farmers Market – The car park of the Mackintosh Centre, Keppoch Street. Open Saturdays, 9.30am–1pm.

Your local sales listings...



Blenheim Rd, Penylan **£339,950**

SOLD!

Immaculately presented detached house, retaining a host of original features, including, fireplaces, stripped floorboards, cornice, picture & dado rails, and mosaic tiled entrance. The stained glass front door and wooden panelled interior doors throughout provide plenty of charm.

3 2 2



SOLD!

Kimberley Rd, Penylan **£310,000**

Situated in the sought after area of Penylan, this bay-fronted, forecourted family home briefly comprises of an entrance hall with period flooring, three spacious reception rooms, kitchen, three double bedrooms, bathroom and enclosed private garden. The property benefits from double glazing throughout and period features.

3 3 1



£335,000

Amesbury Rd, Penylan

This bay-fronted, forecourted period house is within easy access of local shops and amenities, including Wellfield Rd and Waterloo Gdns. The property is currently undergoing extensive renovations throughout.

3 2 2



£320,000

Ladysmith Rd, Penylan

Spacious three-bedroom house with additional loft room, retaining many of its original features including period fireplaces, picture and dado rails, panelling and ceiling roses.

4 3 3



£105,000

Cedar House, Teal Street, Roath

Spacious ground floor corner apartment with dual aspect, open plan kitchen lounge and double bedroom. The apartment is finished to a high standard with designer finishes throughout and benefits from use of communal garden. Located within a unique development of nine newly built one and two bedroom apartments situated in the popular location of Roath close to local amenities and transport links.

1 1 1




Plasgwynt, Pontcanna **£220,000**

Fantastic two bedroom apartment in the heart of Pontcanna. Renovated to a high standard throughout. The property is currently rented until October 2014, so is appealing to both investors and first-time buyers. Large, open-plan lounge and kitchen, two double bedrooms and two bathrooms. There is no parking available with this apartment.

2 1 2

66 Albany Rd, Roath
CF24 3RR, 02920 454555
cps homes.co.uk

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Amanda (right) and her team

Selling in a sellers' market

If you own a property in Roath, or indeed any area in Cardiff, and are considering selling, please don't hesitate to call **Amanda** on **02920 454555** or e-mail her via amanda@cpshomes.co.uk

With house prices on the rise and a newfound confidence amongst buyers, Amanda Trinder, Sales Manager at our Albany Road, Roath branch, describes the impact the sudden boom has had on the area she covers.

Without question, the housing market is a sellers' market at the moment. Demand is far outstripping supply, and prospective buyers are ready and waiting to snap up the next property to come onto the market. Nobody wants to miss out, so a lot of people have alerts set up

“Nowadays, families are reclaiming Roath as their own again, and the old tightknit feel is back. That's another plus point; you simply don't get its sense of community spirit in newly-built areas.”

to automatically e-mail or SMS them as soon as a property that fits their search criteria is listed. We're regularly agreeing sales within a week of the house or flat going live, such as the levels of interest we receive within the first 24-48 hours.

The period houses Roath has to offer, coupled with the fact the area falls within the catchment of schools like Cardiff High School, makes it a highly sought after place to live. In years gone by, students shared the area in equal measures with families and professionals of all different ages and cultures, but the closure of UWIC's university campus on Colchester Avenue in neighbouring Penylan in 2011, combined with the creation of larger houses

and purpose-built accommodation in nearby Cathays and the city centre, has seen student numbers in Roath dwindle in recent years.

Nowadays, families are reclaiming the area as their own again, and the old tightknit feel is

back. That's another plus point for Roath; you simply don't get its sense of community spirit in newly-built areas. Y Rhath, as it's known in the Welsh language, is well-established and has history, which undoubtedly increases its appeal to buyers. It'll take years and years for other Cardiff areas to catch up to it.

I recently sold a house on Angus Street to a couple moving to Cardiff from Portsmouth. Their son had been a student in the area a few years ago and used to speak highly of Roath when chatting to his parents. They were so taken with his positive words about the area, they ended up buying there!

Amanda joined CPS Homes in 2013, having been Sales Manager at Darlows' Roath branch for over 8 years. During that time, she oversaw more than 2,000 sales transactions.

To buy or to rent? That is the question



Since the turn of the millennium, there's been a continuous swing away from ownership as more and more people turn towards the private rented sector. However, with interest rates at an all-time low and lenders loaning as much as five times a person's income in some cases, times are changing: buyers' confidence has returned.

In recent years at least, there hasn't been a better time to become a homeowner. House prices are on the rise – dramatically in some areas – and it's prompted those sat on a healthy deposit into buying before prices rise even further. Even those with little savings are being helped, with the Government's 'Help to Buy' scheme enabling people buy with as little as a 5% deposit and a lender offering a mortgage to cover the other 95%.

Rightly or wrongly, we live in a country where property owners tend to be given a higher

status within society than those who rent. It was once said that "an Englishman's home is his castle"... although we're sure we can adapt that to include Welsh people too. But, while current market conditions are good, as with anything, it all boils down to personal circumstances.

The culture attached to homeownership in these isles certainly doesn't exist in a lot of other European countries, where renting is regularly considered to be the more sensible and cost-effective way of living. It also offers much-needed flexibility to those with financial and

living arrangements prone to change, though doubters will still point to the 'rent money is dead money' argument.

As we know, the ideal scenario is to buy low, sell high(er), and move onto something better, but, as mentioned, that simply isn't an option for some. As a result, there isn't a straightforward answer to the question originally posed, so we spoke to four Cardiff professionals who have this decision to make.



Richard Green, 33

"My fiancé and I are currently in the process of buying for the second time, and we've accepted an offer on our own house.

We're planning to start a family in the near future and were originally intending to upsize after our wedding, but after noticing the amount of 'Sold' boards going up on our street, we decided to put our house on the market sooner rather than later. It was only on for a few weeks before we accepted an offer at the full asking price, and not long afterwards we found the perfect three-bed semi with a huge garden.

Our new house is a lot closer to our family and much bigger than what we've got at the moment, although I'm sure it won't be long before she's filled it with bags and shoes!"

Craig Price, 25

"I've always lived at home with my parents, but it's recently dawned on me that it's time I fled the nest. I've never been a big spender, and I've worked always worked full-time since leaving school at 16, so I've managed to save a fair bit of money along the way.

I'm wary that now is a good time to buy, so I'm registered with all the local estate agents and have Rightmove setup to e-mail me with newly-marketed properties everyday, but I'm quite particular with the area and type of property I'm looking for, so I'm not going to jump into something and settle for second best.

I'm lucky in that I'm in no great rush and flexibility is on my side. I could do with a bit of independence, which is what buying will give me, but I can always get that from renting somewhere with a friend, and continue to save for a bigger deposit in the process."

Helen Showan, 23

"I moved to Cardiff as a student and lived in houses of all different shapes and sizes whilst studying. It made for good experience as I knew exactly what I wanted to live in when I went into full-time work: a modern, spacious flat away from the typical student areas and, most of all, away from a large group of housemates! There's only so long you can live with four or five others before you need your own space.

I bought a two-bedroom flat just under a year ago and was lucky enough to benefit from my mum's financial help when it came to paying the deposit. We were able to pay off a large sum of the sale price from the get-go, meaning a small loan-to-value mortgage and considerably lower monthly repayments than other people I know.

The repayment amounts mean I'm not reliant upon renting out the second bedroom, but I think I will eventually – probably to a friend – if only for a bit of company."

Jodie Lane, 27

"My boyfriend and I currently rent together, but neither of us is originally from Cardiff, so we're allowing ourselves the option of upping sticks and moving closer to family at some point in the future. We're both in jobs that would allow us to transfer elsewhere, so we've always got that move available to us.

Our monthly rent is around the same as what our mortgage repayments would be, so we're no worse off than we would be if we owned our own place, apart from having somewhere to call our own – but there more important things than that.

Renting gives us the flexibility to move to a better area for a cheaper rent every six-to-twelve months, if we wish, so we think of it as trying before buying. We also don't have to concern ourselves with service charges, upkeep costs and any maintenance work that may be required."

Your local rental listings...



Cedar House, Flat 2, Teal Street

£675pcm

AVAILABLE : IMMEDIATELY

Spacious ground floor corner apartment with dual aspect, open plan kitchen lounge and double bedroom. The apartment is finished to a high standard with designer finishes throughout and benefits from use of communal garden. Located within a unique development of nine newly built one and two bedroom apartments situated in the popular location of Roath close to local amenities and transport links.



£2000pcm

Windsor Esplanade, Cardiff Bay

AVAILABLE : IMMEDIATELY

A beautiful, unfurnished four-bedroomed town house situated on the Bay Waterfront, offers space over three floors, spectacular views and uniquely many of its original Victorian features. This property is a must-view!



£700pcm

Verona House, Cardiff Bay

AVAILABLE : IMMEDIATELY

Second floor, executive apartment on Lloyd George Avenue. One double bedroom with ample storage and large en-suite shower room, leaving an option of a second smaller bedroom or study. This is a secure, gated site with allocated parking. Water rates included.



Cedar House, Flat 3, Roath

£650pcm

AVAILABLE : IMMEDIATELY

One of the last two of nine newly built apartments situated in the popular location of Roath. This spacious one double bedroom apartment is situated on the ground has been completed to a high standard throughout, these are particularly evident in the bathroom and fully integrated kitchen. The property benefits from the use of a communal garden.



£675pcm

Penylan Rd, Penylan

AVAILABLE : 1ST AUGUST

Stunning top-floor two-bedroom apartment was completely refurbished in 2012. Whilst the refurbished kitchen, bathroom & flooring remain in good condition. Sound proofing and SAP- testing during renovation work, mean occupants also enjoy environmentally- conscious living.



£625pcm


Sealock Warehouse, Cardiff Bay

AVAILABLE : IMMEDIATELY

This modern double bedroomed apartment is in an ideal location within close proximity to Mermaid Quay. The finishes throughout the property are of an especially high standard. The large open plan lounge/kitchen is finished off perfectly with a wrap-around balcony offering rooftop views.



34 Woodville Rd, Cathays 02920 668585
18 James St, Cardiff Bay 02920 480490
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CPS Homes at the Great Roath Bake Off

Sweet or savoury, chocolate or fruity, whatever your baked guilty pleasure, you would've definitely found it through the doors of St Andrew's Church at The Great Roath Bake Off earlier this spring.

As proud sponsors, we were lucky enough to be on-hand to see the home-made delights as they came through the door, and, as the entries mounted, it became clear that this year's contest had attracted more budding bakers than ever before to our local neighbourhood.

“It is heart warming to know that there are still people who genuinely care about the patients that are under their duty.”

Forks in hand, the judges took up their positions while a throng of spectators watched the judging commence, and our very own Amanda and Sian, part of our Albany Road sales team, sold the last of the charity tea towels we had specially produced. We'd like to extend a huge “thank you” to everyone who bought one. They alone raised £600 towards the grand total of £2,000 raised on the day.

As the judges set to the task at hand, the crowds were entertained by Mickey Mouse, art creations

from guest judge Nathan Wyburn of Britain's Got Talent fame, and live music from Calum Ross, Ragsy from The Voice and others. Putting the icing on the cake were Beca Lyne-Pirkis from the BBC's Great British Bake Off, who held a baking Q&A session, and our very own Lord Mayor of Cardiff, who presented a prize.

We've been thrilled to be part of such a great community event and would like to thank Wayne Courtney and his team for making us feel wholly welcome. They did a great job. Also, massive gratitude goes to everyone who turned out to support the event and charities involved.

WHERE THE MONEY WENT...

The funds raised were split between St Andrew's Church Funds and the A6 Acute Stroke Ward at the University Hospital of Wales (UHW). We felt more than privileged when Wayne Courtney and Elaine Morris, invited Emma and Amanda to present the cheque to the ward.

“It was lovely to see and speak to the staff in the Ward” commented Emma “what struck me most

was the real and genuine funding gap between what the Ward needs and what it could afford. Even basic items like wheelchairs have been acquired through staff fundraising. It is heart warming to know that there are still people who genuinely care about the patients that are under their duty. We were shown equipment bought through fundraising that enabled a young girl in her 20s to reach the bathroom on her own and save her the indignity of a bed bath.”

As Wayne himself explained “this is your ward, your hospital. It serves the people of Cardiff, whether its Cathays, Roath or Canton. For those who've helped raise this money you can be assured it is all going back into your community.”



A few of our favourites...



A big thanks
To everyone who took part and those who came along to support such a worthy cause.



On yer bike

We're delighted to announce our sponsorship of the 'Remembering Owen' bike ride, which has been organised in memory of Cardiff High School student Owen Morris who sadly passed away in September 2013 at the tender age of 13.

An otherwise healthy, active boy with a keen interest in sport, Owen tragically died of a heart attack after collapsing during training with Llanishen RFC's Under-14s team. The news affected us all, so we're hugely pleased to be able to lend our support to this fantastic cause.

The bike ride will see a group of 160 cyclists - including Owen's family, friends and teammates - travel from Cardiff to Brecon on 5th July 2014, staying overnight before returning the following day. The 110-mile round trip starts at Cardiff City Stadium and finishes at Cardiff High School, where Owen was a pupil.

As a result of our donation to the ride, every cyclist will wear a helmet cover bearing the CPS Homes and 'Remembering Owen' logos, instilling a sense of camaraderie and raising public awareness of what the group is aiming to achieve.

FUNDRAISING FOR 'CARDIAC RISK IN THE YOUNG'




'Remembering Owen' is a charity set up by Owen's family and friends and aims to raise funds for Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY). Founded in 1995, CRY offer heart screening and carry out research into the causes of sudden death in young people. They also provide priceless bereavement support and counselling, and the support they have provided Owen's family since his death has been nothing short of incredible.

MORE CHARITY FUNDRAISING EVENTS TO COME.

In addition to the bike ride, the 'Remembering Owen' charity is holding other fundraising events, such as a quiz night, a race night, a wine-tasting evening, coffee mornings, a tea party and a Summer Ball. Their end target is to raise over £20,000 for CRY. If you'd like to find out more about these events or donate to the 'Remembering Owen' cause, you can do so by visiting Owen's fundraising page.



And the winners were...

- * **BAKE OFF:**
Nell Pugh for her chocolate peanut butter cake.
- * **JUNIOR BAKE OFF:** 
Eleri Ford
- * **PROFESSIONAL:** 
Gareth Owen Davies
- * **SAVOURY:** 
Dave of Halcyon Daze



Try it at home...

Chocolate Peanut Butter Mousse Cake

This makes a massive cake – you could make half or two thirds for a more manageable size! The cake can be made in advance and freezes really well. The mousse is best made in advance and frozen, as it makes the cake far sturdier for crumb coating and getting a smooth surface.

You can find the full recipe at cps homes.co.uk/cwtch

All Bake Off images courtesy of RoathCardiff.net

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